



GAZEBO EXPRESS

YOUR COMMUNITY NEWS AND EVENT SOURCE FOR THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND • APRIL 2010

HIGHLAND POLICE LAUDED

It was a traffic stop coupled with spot-on observations that helped Highland Police crack a case involving the theft of at least 30 identities from a local H&R Block and land the two women believed to have masterminded the crime in a federal lock-up awaiting a detention hearing.

Town Council President Mark Herak couldn't be prouder.

"We invest in our police officers and they, in turn, invest in our community," Herak said. "This is a case where our officers did everything they were supposed to do. They helped solve a far-reaching case that has involved countless hours of investigation by the Internal Revenue Service and East Chicago police.

Police Chief Pete Hojnicky said Highland's involvement began just before

10 p.m. March 18 when Acting Corporal Jason Hildenbrand responded to a report of a reckless driver on Indianapolis Boulevard.

"The driver was observed to have traveled left of center several times before police stopped the vehicle. The driver failed field sobriety tests and was taken into custody."


During an inspection of the vehicle, Hildenbrand, along with Sergeant John Banasiak and Officer Erich Swisher, found items associated with H&R Block in East Chicago, including paperwork, laptop computers as well as more than 100 debit cards in third party names and new credit cards. At least one debit card was in the name of a person who had told East Chicago police that someone had filed his tax return before he could. A large amount of cash was also found on both the driver,

Rosetta Y. Buchanan, and the passenger, Francesca A. Foster.

Further investigation revealed that Foster had worked at the East Chicago H&R Block during the time when the identity thefts were believed to have occurred.

With the evidence they had amassed, Highland Police turned the case over to federal agents.

Already, nearly \$300,000 in deposits related to the fraudulent returns -- nearly all from the federal government and Indiana Department of Revenue -- have been tracked down.

"Our officers did a wonderful job of police work in a very short amount of time," Herak said. "They did an amazing job helping to solve this case. We have a lot to be proud of." 



Happy Birthday Highland!

HIGHLAND TURNS 100

When the town was incorporated in 1910 there were 304 people living along the sandy ridge. The population grew quickly after 1950 when farm land became a suburban oasis for steelworkers. Today, we celebrate Highland's legacy.

SPECIAL EDITION INSIDE

Check out today's commemorative edition of the Gazebo Express chock full of centennial reflections and historical tidbits. Join us as we travel back in time to the events that have made our community what it is today!

DETAILS PAGES 3-6

CENTENNIAL ACTIVITIES

Join the town in celebrating its 100th birthday. Centennial events are scheduled throughout the year. From the elegant centennial gala to an old-fashioned community picnic, there's something for everyone.

DETAILS PAGE 6

COUNCIL MEETING CHANGES

The Town Council will swap its regular business meetings and work study sessions beginning this month. Business meetings will begin at 7 p.m. on the first and third Mondays while work study sessions will begin at 7 p.m. on the second and fourth Mondays. All Town Council meetings and work study sessions are held at Town Hall, 3333 Ridge Road.

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NEWS TIP? STORY IDEA?

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AWARD-WINNING BULT OIL PROPERTY ON THE BLOCK

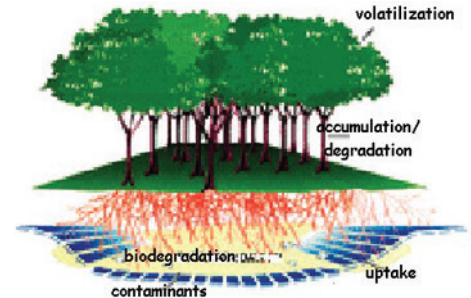
The town is ready to part with the Bult Oil property.

Acquired by the Redevelopment Commission more than seven years ago for the sole purpose of returning the long-vacant parcel at First and Condit streets to its intended use for business or light industry, the sale of the property will complete a chapter in innovation in Highland.

Soils on the property, once contaminated with oil and its by-products, were cleaned using a landmark technology that employed Mother Nature's ability to clean herself. Known as phytoremediation, the town planted 40 hybrid poplars on the property and let the trees' root systems do the work. Over seven years, the property once considered unsuitable for any business has been cleansed. Earlier this year, the property was declared suitable for development.

Highland is the only community in Northwest Indiana to successfully complete the phytoremediation process and at a fraction of the cost of traditional soil remediation. Instead of costing \$300,000 or more, the town's investment in the project was \$75,000. In October, the Redevelopment Commission received the Team Achievement Award from the Northwest Indiana Society of Innovators.

Redevelopment Director Cecile Petro said



BIOTECHNOLOGY AT WORK

Phytoremediation uses plants to clean up pollution in the environment such as metals, pesticides, explosives and oil. Trees remove harmful chemicals from the ground when their roots take in water and nutrients from polluted soil. Once inside, chemicals can be stored or changed into less harmful chemicals within the plant.

the town is giving public notice that the property is up for sale -- at an asking price of \$105,200. In addition to notifying the general public, Petro said the 20 entities that have already expressed interest in purchasing the land will receive individual notices. Public notice is the next step in revitalization of the long-dormant parcel."

TIME TO CLEAN UP THE CLUNKERS

Volunteers in Police Services are working with Building and Inspections to rid the town of unsightly vehicles as well as vehicles sporting out-of-state plates.

And, they need your help.

Junk vehicles are described as any motorized vehicle that does not carry current state license plates; cannot be safely operated under its own power; or is not carried on the most recent tax records of the county assessor's office.

To report a vehicle that meets one or more of these criteria, please contact Building and Inspections at (219) 838-3185 or leave a

message with the Police Departments at (219) 838-1313, ext. 4093.

Any vehicle in violation of town laws will be tagged and/or ticketed and removed.

To report a vehicle of a current resident displaying out-of-state plates, you may either visit www.highlandpolice.com and fill out a form entitled, "License Plate Violation" or call (219) 838-1313, ext. 4093. Anyone found violating the state's licensing laws will be given 60 days to comply.

In each case, those reporting potential violations will be asked to supply a location and vehicle description.



Happy Birthday Highland!

PRESERVING HIGHLAND'S PAST; PLANNING HIGHLAND'S FUTURE

Michael and Judith Johnston may have been Highland's first settlers but it was Archibald McNeil and the brothers, Arthur and Charles Libby, who helped put Highland on the map.

It was known simply as the Highlands from the 1850s when the Johnstons

acquired 53 acres of swampy land until the town was incorporated April 4, 1910 simply because it had a sandy ridge that rose above the marsh.



Michael Johnston



Judith Johnston

Nearly 20 years before Highland was incorporated, the rustic and sparsely populated area became an expansion site for kraut processing for the Libby, McNeil & Libby Company. By 1890, the town's largest industry was a canner of processed cabbage grown by local Dutch farmers.

Nature's bounty would become Highland's legacy. Crops, like cabbage, onions, other root vegetables, as well as summer delights like tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers, would help feed residents living in the bustling industrial cities to the north.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE HIGHLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Employees outside the kraut factory of the Libby, McNeil and Libby plant, which opened at what is now the southwest corner of Fifth Street and Ridge Road. Besides fermenting cabbage into kraut, the company processed pickles and crushed tomatoes.

The abundant harvests of vegetables that flourished in the sandy soil along Ridge Road helped keep the cannery thriving with foods processed there, packaged onto rail cars and shipped to Chicago and points east.

The Johnstons and the Libby venture are footnotes in Highland history as are the legacies left by the Clough, Lynch, Kooy, Van Til and Lamprecht families.

Combined, the footnotes help complete an evolving picture of Highland, more than 100 years of history kept vibrant and alive by residents like Sue Douthett and the members of the Highland Historical Society.

They house mementoes that have been amassed in a large classroom at Lincoln

Center that has been converted into the Town Museum.

Douthett keeps details about the founding families, industries, even topography that catalogs the town's past. As curator of the museum, Douthett preserves the treasures that have been donated from attics and basements throughout town.

She is always looking to share what she has learned, helping to pave a historical trail using markers from the past.

"This is a history worth preserving," she says. "Highland is so interesting because so many of the families who helped build the town in its early days have descendants who have remained in town to this day." 🐦



Happy Birthday Highland!

THAT WAS THEN ...



THIS IS NOW ...



JEWETT STREET DRAWS BUSINESS FOR 100 YEARS

Cindy Ruebel was a nurse who found her passion in the finding and selling of vintage items. Irfan Cumur was a physician who had traveled the globe healing the sick.

The combination of fortunes and events led Ruebel and Cumur to develop a personal relationship that has blossomed into a love affair with antiques and the folks who cherish them.

Together, the two have opened Estate Sale Emporium, a store featuring an eclectic mix of antique furniture and housewares as well as vintage clothing and jewelry.

Theirs is a business devoted to the unique. That it is located in one of the oldest structures in Highland is no accident.

"We were looking at a number of locations but we found we were particularly drawn to this store," Ruebel said. "When we

ESTATE SALE EMPORIUM

HOURS: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Tuesday through Saturday

INFO: Call (219) 923-5556

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Gazebo Express will feature local businesses and individuals throughout the year. If you know of a business or individual doing something innovative or noteworthy, please email us at gazeboexpress@theideafactory.us.com.

learned the history we understood why."

The store at 2813 Jewett Street was already the town's general store when Highland was incorporated in 1910. It was decked out with patriotic bunting in 1927 when President Calvin Coolidge visited

Highland to dedicate Wicker Memorial Park. More than 40,000 would attend the dedication.

It was in the store with the well-worn oak planking on the floors and vintage fixtures on the walls that Ruebel and Cumur found their business home.

It is there they greet returning customers as well as those who visit with items they want to sell. Everyone who comes -- even those who visit for the first time -- leave as friends.

"It seems we develop personal relationships with every one of our customers," Cumur said. "It just seems it's the way it's supposed to be."

"There's something about this store that just feels right," Ruebel said. "We love it here and our customers do, too." 🐞



1900

Tenant farmer John Jansen, his daughter Susie, and his parents stand near a load of onions at home on Carolina Street.



1910

President Andrew Reiner and cashier Henry Daugherty in front of the Farmers & Merchants Bank at the corner of Highway and Kennedy avenues.



1920

Hattie Lamprecht cuts peonies from the family farm along Kleinman Road just south Ridge Road.



1930

Freight and passenger trains run through downtown Highland several times a day, continuing until the service is terminated in the 1970s.



1940

Schoon's Super Market is a popular fixture in town. The building is later incorporated into the expanding Highland Department Store.



1950

Jerry and Don Scheeringa stand in the pig pen with their nephew, Larry Ruiter, on the farm at 9436 Cline Avenue.



Happy Birthday Highland!

THAT WAS THEN ... THIS IS NOW ...



HIGHLAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL TURNS 100, TOO!

When Dutch immigrants settled in Highland, they brought their faith with them.

Believing that learning the lessons of the Bible were just as important as reading and mathematics led church fathers of the Christian Reformed Church to consider combining the two.

With an idea and initial investment of \$422.30 -- \$7.30 in an initial collection and \$415 in refunds from the Christian school in Munster -- church elders voted to establish the Association for Christian Instruction in a church on Jewett Street that would be converted into a school.

That was in 1909 and nearly a year before the 300 residents who had settled along the Ridge would become residents of the town of Highland.

Today, Highland Christian School is a

thriving education center for students in grades K-8. With an enrollment of 375 students and another 90 preschoolers, the school is a happy mix of those who were brought up in the Christian Reformed Church as well as others who value the educational and religious values espoused there.

The school was relocated several times before finding a permanent home along the south side of Main Square, one of three faiths located on the square.

"Our students list nine different denominations and attend 87 different churches," said Jodie Lineburg, director of recruitment and development. "We focus on faith as we provide an academic education that is premier."

Mariellen Boomsma never questioned where her three children would get their

education. They would attend Highland Christian, as she and her siblings had -- as their father before them had.

"We love this school. It is a part of us," said Boomsma, who has helped establish a resale store at Indianapolis Boulevard and U.S. 30 in Schererville to keep school tuitions in check. "We continue to hone and fine-tune the education we provide here, but in so many ways, our mission remains the same today as it has since the school was founded."

Stewardship, faith and commitment remain integral. "We strive to provide a Christ-centered education for all who attend here," she said. "Being reformed means we take the world as it is and restore it to the best of our ability -- to put it back to the way God intended it to be." 🙏



1960

Sylvia Zatkulak, Margaret DeMuth and Sue Grimm work on manual typewriters at the Highland Auto License Branch on Kennedy Avenue.



1970

The Turning Point debuts at the Town Theatre. The movie house entertained generations through the years.



1980

Mary Stonebraker, Marian Battistini and Bertha Moore man the Highland Historical Society booth at the Fall Festival.



1990

Floods devastate the entire Wicker Park Manor subdivision, where residents are displaced from their homes for months.



2000

Thousands turn out to see then-candidate Barack Obama stump for office during a presidential rally at Wicker Park.



2010

Highland Grove continues to draw big business including Best Buy and Gino's East of Chicago.



Happy Birthday Highland!

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS

CELEBRATE A CENTURY

There's still time to grab a seat at the town's biggest party. The black-tie-optional Centennial Gala will celebrate 100 years of Highland.

WHEN: 6 p.m. to midnight April 10

WHERE: Wicker Park Social Center

TICKETS: Tickets are \$75 per person or \$575 for a table of eight.

RESERVATIONS: Call Pat Popa for tickets at (219) 689-6559 or email 100@highland.in.gov.

REENACTMENT & USO DANCE

To honor our WWII veterans, the town will host an authentic USO dance with band. A battle will be reenacted during this historic weekend.

REENACTMENT: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday.

DANCE: 5 to 7 p.m. Saturday

WHERE: Main Square Park

HIGHLAND BIKE TOUR

Come one, come all! Ride your bike on a 10-mile tour through Highland and beyond. Enjoy live music and grilled hot dogs near the bike trail upon your return.

WHEN: August 7

WHERE: Highland bike trail

Show your support!

To sponsor or underwrite a specific event, call Pat Popa at (219) 689-6559 or email 100@highland.in.gov.

COMMUNITY PICNIC

Bring a picnic to Main Square and listen to the Highland Community Band perform a free concert. You can take a carriage ride through town or compete in a sack race. Highland's volunteer firefighters will be manning the grills so you can even purchase a burger for a small fee.

WHEN: June 13

WHERE: Main Square Park

SCARECROW CONTEST

Build and vote for your favorite and enjoy the pop art display of creative scarecrows. Small entry fee for participants. Free event for the public.

WHEN: October 16 to 30

WHERE: Downtown Highland

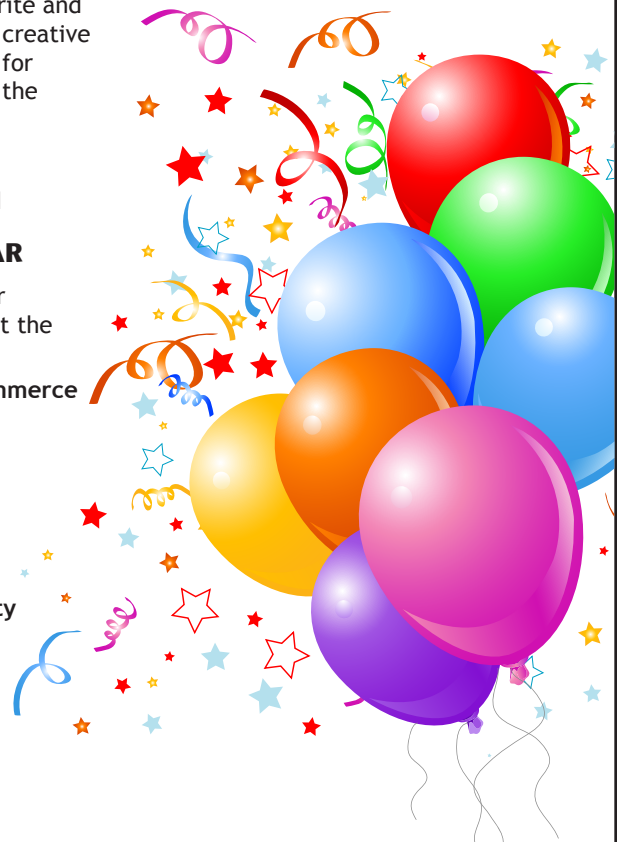
CENTENNIAL CALENDAR

There's still time to get your centennial calendar for \$7 at the following locations:

- Highland Chamber of Commerce
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Monday through Friday
- Lamprecht Florist
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday through Friday
9 a.m. to noon Saturday
- Highland Historical Society
10 a.m. to noon Saturday

CENTENNIAL GARDEN

A special garden is blooming this spring. Nearly 500 square feet of plantings have broken through the ground in front of Town Hall. Enjoy the display, laden with the Fuchsia of the official Centennial Tulip! Later this spring, enjoy a beautiful perennial garden cultivated by area gardeners, celebrating a century of community in one highly visible spot! This tribute to our first century will be blooming for years to come.



A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE HIGHLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY!

A big thank you to Sue Douthett and the members of Highland Historical Society. Historical society members work tirelessly to preserve Highland's past for all of us.

The Town Museum is a treasure trove of artifacts and information. Created by the historical society, the museum is open from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturdays and by appointment. There is no charge. Donations are welcome.



Become a fan of the Highland Historical Society on Facebook -- Highland, IN Historical Society as well as another site devoted to Highland -- Growing Up in Highland, IN.

TOWN BUYS THIRD PARCEL FOR PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY

The town has purchased its third residential property -- this one at 8745 Cottage Grove Avenue for \$135,000.

The property immediately west of Town Hall is vital to the plans the Town Council has for constructing a central public safety facility at the 3333 Ridge Road address.

Last year, the town acquired two other residential properties along Ridge Road just west of Town Hall, to provide some of the square footage needed to house both police and fire equipment and personnel. The Cottage Grove property is the final piece necessary for the project.

Town Council President Mark Herak said he was pleased that negotiators for the town and the owner of the property, Patricia A. Meyer, were able to come to an agreement.


"With this purchase, we will be able to move forward on constructing a tandem police/fire facility. We may, at some point, be able to acquire the property at the northeast

corner of Ridge and Cottage Grove but it isn't necessary."

The plan is to locate police and fire on the site of the existing Town Hall and relocate administrative offices, including the Clerk-Treasurer, Building Commissioner and Redevelopment to a new building that will replace the Central Fire Station, located at Highway and Fourth Street downtown.

After serving the community for the last 40 years, studies have shown that a new facility would be a more prudent investment than would continuing to pour money into the building that will never be able to be retrofitted to provide for the technological and space needs of the community.

Herak said there is no firm timetable for the project.

"Purchasing these properties is an investment in our future," he said. "We are continuing to plan for a centralized public safety facility to move the town forward." 

TRASH FEES INCREASE

Trash pick-up fees will increase an average of 57 cents per month -- or \$6.84 per year. The increase will be paid to the town's vendor, Republic Services, Inc.

Town Council President Mark Herak said he is convinced that the increase this year -- as well as the four percent annual increases that are guaranteed in the contract for the next two years -- were the lowest annualized increases available in the market.

Homeowners 65 or older qualify for a \$1 per month senior discount. Forms are available at Town Hall.

PROPERTY TAXES DUE

Look for property tax bills in April that will be due May 10. This marks the first time since 2004 that tax bills have been on time.

The bills will be estimated based on what you paid in the last billing cycle. Watch for a truing up during the next set of bills in the fall.

CLINE AVENUE UPGRADE ON DECK

An upgrade of Cline Avenue -- from Ridge Road south to 45th Street -- is on schedule and under budget.

Bids for the project, which is a cooperative venture between Highland and Griffith have come in 20 percent lower than expected.

The low bid of \$4.1 million was submitted by Gatlin Plumbing and Heating Inc. Engineers had estimated the cost of the project would be \$5.1 million. The cost of the Cline Avenue facelift will be paid using a combination of federal highway and local road funds. The local match for the project is expected to be about \$800,000, which will be shared by Highland and Griffith.

That cost will be reduced further, thanks to the federal government. Nearly \$1.4 million in federal stimulus funds have been secured for the project, significantly reducing the local match for the project.

The project will be completed this year. As part of the road work, Cline Avenue will be


CONSTRUCTION UPDATE



The Cline Avenue reconstruction will come with its own set of traffic headaches. The project is expected to begin in May and continue through the rest of the construction season.

Because the project includes the rebuilding of the Cady Marsh ditch, it is likely that section of Cline will be closed between Wirth Road and Ernie Strack Drive for more than a month.

rebuilt and widened to three lanes.

Additionally, ditches that line the road will be replaced with storm sewers. Curbs and lighting will also be included. 

CAST YOUR VOTE MAY 4

The primary election for political candidates and the school board will be held May 4. You may vote in person at the county election board office beginning April 5 or request a mail-in absentee ballot at www.in.gov/sos/elections or by calling the county election board at (219) 755-3795. All absentee ballots cast by mail must be received by April 26.

STAND UP AND BE COUNTED!

Time is running out to fill out your census forms and drop them in the mail. The U.S. Census Bureau will continue to accept census forms through early April.

Every person who is counted helps money to continue to flow into the community, dollars which are dedicated to local improvements.

PLAY BALL!

The 2010 Highland Little League season kicks off at Markley Park.

WHEN: 9:30 a.m. April 24

WHERE: Opening day ceremonies for Highland Little League will take place at the Michael Williams Field of Dreams at Markley Park.

SPRING ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR

The best in arts and crafts will be showcased at this annual spring show. The two-day event features jewelry, ceramics, fiber arts and more.

WHEN: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. April 24 and 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. April 25

WHERE: Lincoln Center

INFO: Call (219) 838-0114

ZUMBA FITNESS

"Ditch the workout and join the party" is Zumba's motto. This high-energy Latin dance workout is an hour of fun suitable for all ages, work-out levels and dance abilities.

WHEN: 6 to 7 p.m. Fridays, April 30 through May 21

WHERE: Lincoln Center

FEE: \$45 residents/\$48 nonresidents

REGISTER: At the Parks and Recreation office at Lincoln Center or online at www.activenwi.com by April 23.

INFO: Call (219) 838-0114

TEEN ART CLASS

This six-week art course teaches teens age 13 to 16 how to work with pencil and ink to draw animals, figures and cartoons. As the weeks progress, painting with acrylics will be explored. By the end of the course, each participant will have combined those techniques into a finished picture.

WHEN: 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. Fridays, April 23 through May 28

WHERE: Lincoln Center

FEE: \$35 residents/\$38 nonresidents

REGISTER: At the Parks and Recreation office at Lincoln Center or online at www.activenwi.com by April 16.

INFO: Call (219) 838-0114

DANCE-STYLE AEROBICS

Exercise to the sounds of the 50s through the 90s with fun and unique cardiovascular, energy-building, dance-style aerobics. Combined with hand weights and floor exercises, participants tone while they increase flexibility and build strength.

WHEN: 6 to 7 p.m. or 7 to 8 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, April 20 through May 27

WHERE: Lincoln Center

FEE: \$32 residents/\$35 nonresidents

REGISTER: At the Parks and Recreation office at Lincoln Center or online at www.activenwi.com by April 13.

INFO: Call (219) 838-0114

GIRLS FUN RUN

Register for the first "New Balance Girls on the Run" non-competitive 5K race. Proceeds from the race will benefit Girls on the Run of Northwest Indiana, which encourages a lifetime of healthy living and positive self-esteem for girls in third through eighth grades.

WHEN: 9 a.m. May 22

WHERE: The race will begin at Our Lady of Grace Church and meander through north Highland.

FEE: \$15 by May 8/\$20 after May 8

INFO: Registration forms are available at Lincoln Center or by contacting Jill Schlueter-Kim at (219) 384-8276 or email gotrofnwi@yahoo.com.

MARKETING YOUR BUSINESS

Propel, an organization that helps small businesses succeed, will host a half-day marketing seminar. Join marketing pro Jim Roos, professional coach/author Leanne Hoagland-Smith and social media guru Kathy Sipple as they give you the tools to take your business to new heights.

WHEN: 8:30 a.m. to noon April 16

WHERE: Faith Church in Dyer

FEE: \$40

REGISTER: propelconference.com

INFO: Call (219) 864-0300

